

MR. DOOLEY ON DIVORCE

By F. P. Dunne. Pictures by Gordon Ross.

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"Well, Sir," said Mr. Dooley, "I see they've been holdin' a Divorce Congress."

"What's that?" asked Mr. Hennessy.

"Ye wudden't know," said Mr. Dooley. "Divorce is th' only luxury supplied be th' law that we don't injure in Ar-rheey Road. Up here whin a married couple get to th' pint where 'tis impossible fr' them to go on livin' to-



"In Kentucky Baldness Is Grounds fr' Divorce."

gether they go on livin' together. They feel that way some mornin' in ivry month, but th' next day finds them still glarin' at each other over th' ham an' eggs. No wife iver laves her husband while he has th' breath iv life in him, an' anny gentleman that took a trip to Soo Falls in order to saw off th' housekeepin' expenses on a rash successor wud find trouble ready fr' him whin he come back to Ar-rheey Road. No, Sir, whin our people grab hands at th' altar, they're hooked up fr' ever. Marriage wud us is a life sentence at hard labor. There's on'y one way to get out o' it, an' that's th' one that entitles ye to a ride just behind th' pall bearers. That's why I'm a bachelor. 'Tis th' fine skylark iv a trimpyr husband I'd make, bringin' home a new wife ivry fourth iv July an' dischargin' th' old wif without a character. But th' customs iv th' neighbors are agin it.

"But 'tis different with others, Hinnissy. Down be Michigan Av'nue marrieds is no more bindin' than a dream. A short married life an' an unhappily wif is th'ir motto. Off with th' old wif an' on with th' new an' off with that. 'Till death us do part,' says th' preacher. 'Or th' jury,' whispers th' blushin' bride.

"Th' Divorce Congress, Hinnissy, that I'm tellin' ye about was assembled to make th' laws iv all th' States on divorce th' same. It's a turrible scandal as it is now. A man shakes his wif in waf State on'y to be grabbed be her an' led home th' mornin' he crosses th' border. There's no safety fr' anny wif. In some places it's almost impossible fr' a man to get rid iv his family unless he has a good reason. There's no regularity at all about it. In Kentucky baldness is grounds fr' divorce; in Ohio th' picture hat. In Illinoy a woman can be freed fr' th' gallin' bonds iv matrimony because her husband wears Congress gaiters; in Wisconsin a wif can have her maiden name back because th' old man aches with his knife.

"In Nebraska th' shackles are busted because father forgot to wipe his boots; in New York because mother knows a Judge in South Dakota. Ye can be divorced fr' annything if ye know where to lodge th' complaint. Among th' grounds are snorin', deafness, because wif iv th' parties drinks an' th' other doesn't, because they both drink, because th' husband is losin' his teeth, because th' wif is addicted to sick headaches, because he asked her what she did with that last \$10 he gave her, because he knows some waf else, because she injures th' society iv th' young, because he f'grot to wind th' clock, because she wears a switch. A husband can get a divorce because he has more money than he had; a wif because he has less. Ye can always get a divorce fr' what Hogan calls incompatibility iv temper. That's whin husband an' wif are both cross at th' same time. Ye'd call it a tiff in ye'er family, Hinnissy.

"But, mind ye, none iv these reasons go in anny two States. A man that wants to be properly divorced so there's no danger whin he crosses th' river at Cincinnati that he'll have to wheel th' baby carriage that give him his freedom will have to start out an' do a tour iv xax

gr-reat Raypublic. An' be th' time he's thurly released he may want to do it all over again with th' second choice iv his wif, glad heart.

"It wud be a grand thing if it cud be straightened out. Th' laws ought to be th' same ivrywhere. In anny part iv this fair land iv ours it shud be th' right iv anny man to get a divorce, with alimony, simply be goin' before a Justice iv th' Peace an' makin' an affidavit that th' lady's face had grown too bleak fr' his taste. Be Hivins, I'd go farther. Rather than have people endure this sarvicehood I'd let anny man escape be jumpin' th' contract. All he'd have to do if I was r-runnin' this Government wud be to put some clothes in th' grip, write a note to his wif that after thinkin' it over fr' forty years he had made up his mind that his warm nature was not suited to marriage with th'



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mother iv so many iv his childer, an' go out to return no more.

"I don't know much about married life, except what ye tell me an' what I r-read in th' papers. But it must be sad. All over this land unhappily mated couples are sufferin' now an' then almost as much as if they had a sliver in their thumb or a slight headache. Th' misfortunes iv these people are beyond belief. I say, Hinnissy, it is th' jooty iv th' law to makefully release them. Ye take th' case iv me frind fr' Coke City that I was readin' about th' other day. There was a martyr fr' ye. Poor fellow! Me eyes filled with tears thinkin' about him. Whin a young man he married. He was a fireman in thim days, an' th' object iv his eternal affection was th' daughter iv th' most popylar saloon keeper in town. A gr-reat soeal gulf opened between them. He had fine prospects iv ivinchooly bein' promoted to two-fifty a day, but she was heirless to a cellar full iv Monongahela rye an' a pool table, an' her parents objected, because iv th' difference in their positions. But love such as his is not to be denied. Th' bold suitor won. Together they eloped to Pittsburg an' were married.

"Fr' a short time all went well. They lived together happily fr' twenty years an' raised waf iv th' popylous families iv people who expect to be supported in their old days. Th' inepchuse lover, spurred on be th' desire to make good with his queen, slugged, cheated, an' wurruked his way to th' head iv th' railroad. He was no longer Greasy Bill, th' Oil Can, but Willum Aitch Bliggins, th' Prince iv Indesthree. All th' different ands iv money he iver heard iv rolled into him, large money an' small, other people's money, money he'd labored fr' an' money he'd wished fr'. Whin he set in his office countin' it he often left a call fr' tin o'clock fr' fear he might be d'reamin' an' not get to th' roundhouse on time. But, bein' an American citizen, he soon felt as sure iv himself as though he'd got it all in th' Probate Court, an' th' arly Spring saw him on a private car speedin' to New York, th' home iv Mirth. He was rayclevved with open arms be ivry waf in that gr-reat city that knew the combination iv th' safe. He was taken fr' yacht rides be his fellow-Kings iv Finance. He was th' principal guest iv honor at a modest but tasteful dinner, where there was a large artificial lake iv champagne into which th' compny cud dive. He become th' prize package iv th' Waldorf. In th' on'y part iv New York ye iver read about—ar-re there no churches or homes in New York, but on'y hotels, night restaurants, an' poolrooms?—in th' on'y part iv New York ye read about he cud be seen anny night sittin' where 'h' lights cud fall on his bald but youthful head. An' little Angelica Gundrop, th' lady next to th' end iv th' first row on th' right, looked on him with those big eyes iv hers that said so little an' meant how much.

"And how was it all this time in dear old Coke City? It is painful to say that th' lady to whom our frind was tied fr' life had not kept pace with him. She had taught him to r-read, but he had gone on an' taken what Hogan calls th' post-grajate course. Women get all their book larnin' before marriage; men afther. She'd been pretty active about th' childer while he was pickin' up more iddication in th' way iv business than she'd iver d'ream iv knowin'. She had th' latest news about th' trouble in th' Methodist Church, but he had a private wire into his office.

"A life spint in nourishin' th' young, Hinnissy, while fine to read about, isn't anny kind iv a beauty restorer, an' I've got to tell ye that th' lady probably looked different fr' th' gazelle he used to whistle three times fr' when he wud be on Number Eleven. It's no aisy thing to rock th' cradle with waf hand an' ondy late th' hair with another. Be th' time he was gettin' out iv th' sellin' class in New York she was slowin' down

locked her in. She ever wint so far as to d'hrav e him th' last cow'rdly weapon iv brutal wives—their tears. One time she th'raveled to New York an' waf iv his frinds seen her. Oh, it was crool, crool. Hinnissy, tell me, wud ye condim this gr-reat man to such a slavery just because he'd made a rash promise whin he didn't have a cent in th' wurruled? Th' law said no. Whin th' Gr-reat Financier cud stand it no longer he called upon th' Judge to strike off th' chains an' make him a free man. He got a divorce."

"I dare ye to come down to my house an' say thim things," said Mr. Hennessy.

"Oh, I know ye don't agree with me," said Mr. Dooley. "Nayether does Father Kelly. He's got it into his head that whin a man's married he's married, an' that's all there is to it. He puts his hand in th' grab-bag an' pulls out a blank an' he don't get his money back. 'Ill-mated couples,' says he. 'Ill-mated couples? What are ye talkin' about? Ar-re there anny other kinds? Ar-re there anny two people in th' wurruled tha' are perfectly mated?' he says. 'Was there iver a frindship



"In Wisconsin, Because th' Old Man Ates with His Knife."

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locked her in. She ever wint so far as to d'hrav e him th' last cow'rdly weapon iv brutal wives—their tears. One time she th'raveled to New York an' waf iv his frinds seen her. Oh, it was crool, crool. Hinnissy, tell me, wud ye condim this gr-reat man to such a slavery just because he'd made a rash promise whin he didn't have a cent in th' wurruled? Th' law said no. Whin th' Gr-reat Financier cud stand it no longer he called upon th' Judge to strike off th' chains an' make him a free man. He got a divorce."

"I dare ye to come down to my house an' say thim things," said Mr. Hennessy.

"Oh, I know ye don't agree with me," said Mr. Dooley. "Nayether does Father Kelly. He's got it into his head that whin a man's married he's married, an' that's all there is to it. He puts his hand in th' grab-bag an' pulls out a blank an' he don't get his money back. 'Ill-mated couples,' says he. 'Ill-mated couples? What are ye talkin' about? Ar-re there anny other kinds? Ar-re there anny two people in th' wurruled tha' are perfectly mated?' he says. 'Was there iver a frindship



"In Wisconsin, Because th' Old Man Ates with His Knife."

even fr' Coke City. Their tastes was decidedly dissimilar, says th' pa-aper. Time was whin he carrid th' wash pitcher down to th' corner fr' a quart iv malt, while she dandled th' baby an' fried th' round steak at th' same time.

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that was annything more than a kind iv suspension bridge between quarrels?" he says. "In ivry branch iv life," says he, "we leap fr' scrap to scrap," he says. "I'm waf iv th' best-tempered men in th' wurruled, am I not? ('Ye are not,' says I.) 'I'm waf iv th' kindest iv mortals,' he says, 'but put me in th' same house with Saint Jerome,' he says, 'an' there'd be at laste waf day in th' month whin I'd answer his last wurruled be slammin' th' dure behind me,' he says. 'Man is natchrally a fightin' an' quarrelin' animal with his wif. Th' soft answer don't always turn away wrath. Sometimes it makes it

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